MOKUMOKUREN

1

THE SUMMER HIKARU DIED

PARDON, MA'AM.
CAN WE GRAB SOME ICE CREAM?
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
CHAPTER 1
氷印アイス
HYOIN ICE
BZZH BZZH BZZH
AHH, NICE AN' COOL...
WAIT— THERE'S BARELY ANY LEFT!
DANG. ALL THEY GOT IS A PAPICCO.
Frusty-cold ice cream avail.
Yamahisa
BZZH BZ

THE SUMMER

HIKARU DIED

MOKUMOKUREN

1

山ス YAMAHISA

Take your trash with you.

Frusty-cold ice cream avail. Yamahisa

"ICE CREAM AVAIL.," MY ASS!

AN' WHAT THE HECK'S "FRUSTY-COLD" ICE CREAM ANYWAY?

CHAPTER 1

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1 ——— 001

Chapter 2 ——— 023

Chapter 3 ——— 051

Chapter 4 ——— 079

Chapter 5 ——— 105

Chapter 6 ——— 131

Bonus ——— 163

BZZH BZZH BZZH
Still, can't believe that jerk Hara made us run long-distance in this blazin' heat...
BZZH BZZH BZZH
Right. What it is is tor-cher, ain't it?
...Hikaru.
You said "torture" all weird.
Oh? Did I?
You said it like you'd say "for sure."
But it's the same intonation as "scorcher."
BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH BZZH
Gotcha. Torture... It's torture.
I'll be careful 'bout that.

BZZHBZZHBZZH

HAAH...

IT'S BEEN A WHOLE SIX MONTHS SINCE THEN. GUESS Y'AIN'T GONNA REMEMBER ANY MORE'N YOU ALREADY DO.

NAW. NOT AT ALL.

BZZHBZZHBZZH

...SO...

...YOU REALLY DON'T REMEMBER GOIN' MISSIN' IN THE MOUNTAINS FOR OVER A WEEK?

BZZHBZZHBZZH

IT AIN'T ALL RIGHT.

EVERY-ONE WAS WORRIED SICK 'BOUT YA.

QUIT IT!

SHOVE

IT'S ALL RIGHT, AIN'T IT? HOW MUCH LONGER YA GONNA KEEP ASKIN' ME 'BOUT IT?

BZZHBZZHBZZH

SO YA MISSED ME WHEN I WAS GONE?

BZZHBZZHBZZH

BZZHBZZHBZZH

NOT REALLY ...

NAW.

BZZHBZZHBZZH

DON'T GET CARRIED AWAY.

AH! AGAIN !?

BZZHBZZHBZZH

YOU LIAR! YOU MUSTA CRIED LIKE A BABY. BET YOU WERE ALL LIKE, "WAAAH! DON'T LEAVE ME ALL ALONE, HIKARUUU-BOO-HOO!"

BZZHBZZHBZZH

HEY.

CAN I ASK YA SOME-THIN' THAT MIGHT SOUND KINDA WEIRD?

.....

BZZHBZZHBZZH

YA ALWAYS DO THAT, JUST 'COS YER BIGGER'N ME...

WHAT IS IT?
GONNA CONFESS YER FEELINGS TO ME?
NAW.
...LISTEN, THIS AIN'T SOMETHIN' THAT CAME TA ME JUST NOW.
BZZH BZZH BZZH
IT'S BEEN ON MY MIND EVER SINCE YOU WENT MISSIN' AN' CAME BACK.
SO I'VE BEEN WONDERIN' 'BOUT IT FOR A WHILE...
BZZH BZZH BZZH
YOU AIN'T THE REAL HIKARU, ARE YA?

HUH?

.....

.....

...WHY...?

ZOONE

I'M S'POSED TO BE A PERFECT COPY OF 'IM...

...AH...

...DON'T TELL ANYONE...

PLEASE ...

I MAY BE BORROWIN' THIS BODY AN' PERSON-ALITY...

...BUT MY FEELIN'S FOR YOU ARE REAL...

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE LIVED AS A HUMAN.

SCHOOL, FRIENDS, ICE CREAM— I'M ENJOYIN' ALL OF THEM FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER...

I DON'T WANT TO KILL YOU...

SO PLEASE...

I'LL SQUEEZE

.....

HAA...

HFF

HUFF

AT ANY RATE, HIKARU'S NOT AROUND ANYMORE...
IF THAT'S HOW IT IS THEN I WANT YOU TO BE
BY MY SIDE EVEN IF YOU ARE FAKE.

OKAY
...

...
"HIKARU."

NICE
TO
MEET
YA.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

HOW 'BOUT YOU, YOSHIKI?

[illegible] GONNA DO AFTER YOU'RE DONE WITH KUBOGAYAMA [illegible]

[illegible] YOU CAN LEAVE THIS BACKWATER VILLAGE AND GO TO A UNIVERSITY IN TOKYO.

HAVEN'T REALLY THOUGHT 'BOUT IT EITHER.

HAVEN'T GIVEN IT MUCH THOUGHT. PROLLY RUN MY GRANDPA'S SHIITAKE MUSHROOM FARM.

SOUNDS NICE WISH I COULD DO THAT

IF I DO GO TO TOKYO FOR UNIVERSITY, I'LL BE LIVIN' ON MY OWN

PFFT! GROSS, DUDE!

HOW 'BOUT YOU GO TO HELL, THEN?

.....

OH, WAIT. OR IS IT THAT YA DON'T WANNA BE AWAY FROM ME?

IF YA DON'T WANT ME DOIN' THAT, THEN YER PLACE'LL JUST HAVE TO BE MY SPOT FOR DROPPIN' DELICES.

HA! COULD YA?

THE HELL IT DOES.

THAT'S WHEN I WAS THREE, BUT I COULD STILL DO IT NOW.

I HATE PUBLIC RESTROOMS. I JUST CAN'T DO MY BUSINESS WITH THAT MANY PEOPLE AROUND.

AN IF I END UP IN TOKYO AND FIND MYSELF NEEDIN' TO CRAP, I'LL HEAD ON OVER TO YER PLACE

YOU USED TO SHIT OUTSIDE, THOUGH.

AW, C'MON, MAN. Y'ALWAYS GET SORE WHENEVER WE TALK ABOUT GIRLS

I AIN'T GONNA GET NO GIRL-FRIEND

OR MAYBE I'LL JUST HANG AROUND AT YER PLACE ALL THE TIME. YOU COULD GET YERSELF A CUTE GIRLFRIEND AN' EVERYTHIN', AND YOU'D NEVER BE ABLE TO BRING HER HOME 'COS I'D ALWAYS BE AROUND.

...I'M SURE YOU COULD GET YERSELF A GIRLFRIEND!

HIKARU!

OH...

YOSHIKI! WHAT'S UP?

HEY!

WEEKEND'S NO GOOD FOR ME.

...IT'S A SEE-KWEHT.

AH!

CHIRP!

CHIRP!

I CREAK

SO DUMB...

THE LAST TIME I SAW HIS FACE WAS WHEN HE WAS IMPERSONATING HARA.

BAM

YOSHIKI!!!! COME EAT BREAKFAST ALREADY!

SHOVE

FOR THE LOVE OF—! HIKARU'S BEEN WAITING FOR YOU, YOU KNOW!? HURRY UP!

AH!

HANG ON...

OH, HEY, YOSHIKI...

MORNIN'.

S-SO THIS MORNIN' MY MAMA—

BUMP

YOU AN IDIOT?

NO TIME FOR THAT. WE GOTTA GET TA SCHOOL.

BDMP

DON'T WANNA BE LATE.

OKAY.

WE DON' WANT OL' HARA GETTIN' MAD AT US AGAIN...

YEAH, ALL THE MORE THE REASON WE GOTTA HURRY

WHATEVER YOU ARE, HAVIN' YA BY MY SIDE IS WAY BETTER THAN NOT HAVIN' YOU AT ALL...

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

CHAPTER 1 END

HIKARU'S FAVORITES

- WATERMELON
- SNACKS AND SWEETS AND STUFF

MORE RECENTLY, FRIED CUTLETS

YOSHIKI'S FAVORITES

- PICKLED PLUMS

HE'S NOT A BIG FAN OF SWEETS

EVEN WITH HIS STOMACH ISSUES, HE'S A GROWING BOY WHO'S ALWAYS HUNGRY

any of them in your place!

CHAPTER 2

HE'S CRYIN'.

IS THAT REALLY

HUH? WHY'RE YA CRYIN' AT THIS MOVIE? 'S THE FIFTH TIME YOU'VE SEEN IT, AT

BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME *I'VE* SEEN IT.

IT'S IN MY MEMORY OF COURSE.

ド

AH...

MNCH MNCH

OH, WE USED TA GO OUT AN' EAT STUFF SOMETIMES, HUH!?

CRUNCH

I MEAN, I KNOW THIS FLAVOR, BUT...

GOOD!

WHOOOOOA!

IT'S SO DANG GOOD! GAWD, THAT CRUNCH!

I GOT THE SAME EXACT MEMORIES AS HIM, BUT I NEVER ACTUALLY EXPERIENCED ANY OF 'EM.

YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT.

I WAS NEVER ALIVE TO BEGIN WITH.

SO IT'S MY FIRST TIME EVEN FEELIN' A CLEAR SENSE OF "ME."

YOU'RE BEIN' WAY TOO LOUD.

...STILL, IT IS STRANGE THAT IT'S NEW TO YOU EVEN THOUGH YOU REMEMBER IT.

AH HA!

I DUNNO.

A GHOST, HUH? MM... NAW, THAT AIN'T IT EXACTLY.

BUT I KNOW FER SURE I WAS SOME SORTA MESSED-UP GHOULIE. HA-HA.

...HA-HA. YOU A GHOST OR SOMETHIN'?

RUB

MEW.

OH.

IT'S MINCE-ANIKI.

DID HE GET FAT AGAIN FROM ALL THE FOOD THE BUTCHER'S BEEN GIVIN' HIM?

YUP. SURE LOOKS LIKE IT.

HISSSSSS!

DASH

.....

YA SEE THAT? THAT CAT CAN REALLY BOOK IT, HUH!?

WA HA!

HE WAS REALLY UPSET.

MAYBE IT'S 'COS OF ME.

AN' ALL I WAS DOIN' WAS EATIN' A MINCE-MEAT CUTLET!

THAT REALLY TICKS ME OFF, Y'KNOW? GA-HA-HA-HA!

THAT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN MINCE-ANIKI THREATEN SOMEONE LIKE THAT.

HE'S DONE EATIN'.

...YOU WANNA GO ANYPLACE ELSE IN TOWN?

THE ONLY OTHER THINGS AROUND ARE THAT SHABBY DINER OR THE MION MALL, THOUGH...

OH.

HUH... YOU'LL GO WITH ME?

YA KNOW ...

...YER BEIN' REAL NICE TO SOMEONE LIKE ME...

AS NICE AS YOU'VE EVER BEEN...

I AIN'T SURE WHAT YER TALKIN' 'BOUT...

...BUT EITHER WAY, YER STILL BEIN' NICE TA ME.

...I AIN'T BEIN' NICE.

IF I MAKE EXCUSES FOR MYSELF, I CAN'T VERY WELL COME DOWN ON OTHERS.

TIK TIK

TIK TIK TIK...

TIK TIK TIK

BZZH BZZH BZZH

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

BZZH BZZH BZZH

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

IT'S A SUMMER DARTER.

A TYPICAL RED DRAGON-FLY.

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

BUT IT'S NOT THAT RED YET.

BZZH BZZH BZZH

OH, A DRAGONFLY.

HUH. WHAT'S THE DIFFER-ENCE?

THIS ONE'S A SUMMER DARTER...

THE ONE ASSOCIATED WITH FALL IS AN AUTUMN DARTER.

IN SUM-MER?

A RED DRAG-ONFLY, HUH?

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

...SUMMER DARTERS AN' AUTUMN DARTERS LOOK NEARLY IDENTICAL, BUT THEY'RE DIFFERENT SPECIES.

IT'S A PAIN TO EXPLAIN.

HMM

I WONDER THEY CALL YOU "EMIL"...

HE LOOKS JUST LIKE HIKARU, BUT WHATEVER HE IS, HE AIN'T HIKARU.

JUST WHAT THE HECK IS HE?

AND I'M JUST AS CRAZY FOR ACCEPTIN' ALL OF IT...

THIS IS CRAZY.

WHO'S BE SURE I'M NOT DREAMING? I'M SO SCARED IT'S NOT MY FAULT! IS IT HIKARU? IS IT MY FAULT HIKARU WAS KIDNAPPED? JUST WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON? I DON'T WANNA BE ALONE SORRY HIKARU

I'M SO SCARED

I'M SO SCARED

I'M SO SCARED

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

SURE.

FINE WITH ME.

SO I WAS THINKIN' NEXT TIME I COULD READ MORE OF *MASTER + MASTER* AT YOUR PLACE...

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

OH, SO HOW FAR... ...DIDJA READ?

RON JUST LEFT THE ISLAND!

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

THAT'S BARELY ANYTHIN' AT ALL. YOU'RE BASICALLY AT THE OPENIN' STAGE.

ALL RIGHT. S'FINE IF YOU READ 'EM NEXT TIME YOU COME BY...

OH, BUT I'M MISSIN' VOLUME THREE.

SHEESH!

NO WORRIES. I'LL FIGURE SOMETHIN' OUT FOR THAT.

BUT I WAS KINDA WONDERIN' HOW COME YA GOT ELEVEN COPIES OF THE FIRST VOLUME—

NOU-NUKI-SAMA ...

DON'T TELL ME YER DOWN HERE NOOOW!

AH...AHH...

WHYYY?

EEEK! STAY BACK! GO AWAY!

WHOA. "NO MONKEY"-SAMA? THE HECK IS THAT?

SCARY.

I REALLY HATE THIS KINDA STUFF...

DON'T PAY HER NO MIND.

.....

AH!
WAIT UP!

LET'S GO.

CROAK

CROAK CROAK CROAK
YOSHI-KI.
SEE YA TOMOR-ROW.
...
HEY... HIKARU REALLY IS DEAD, HUH?
...
YES.

NO DOUBT ABOUT THAT.

OH, NO WAY! HE WAS BREATHIN' HIS LAST WHEN I CAME UPON HIM.

SO... DID YOU...?

...BUT IT'S ALREADY DEAD.

THIS BODY HAS A PULSE AND WARMTH TO IT...

WAS LIKE THAT FOR A GOOD LONG WHILE— JUST NOT FEELIN' ANYTHIN'.

I 'MEMBER WANDERIN' THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS FOR SOME TIME...

I WAS PRETTY MUCH LIKE A MACHINE ON AUTOPILOT ALL THAT TIME.

THEN HIKARU WAS ABOUT TO DIE...

AND BEFORE I KNEW IT, I WAS LIKE THIS...

HUH ...?

WHAT ...?

...AND YOU LIKE ME?

HE NEVER SAID ANYTHIN' LIKE THAT BEFORE. NOT ONCE.

I'M CRAZY FOR YOU.

...I DO.

...THEN NEVER DISAPPEAR ON ME *EVER* AGAIN.

IF THAT'S SO...

RATTLE, RATTLE...SHUT.

CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK
STAY AWAY!!
STAY AWAY!!

HFI!

EE!

HFI!

I'VE GOT A DELIV-ERY FOR YOU.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN?

ZZT

AH! AHH!

I AIN'T OPENIN' THE DOOR!

HELLO? ANYONE HOOOME ?

OHH? MAYBE SHE'S NOT HERE?

BZZ..

HFFFFF.....

HFFFFF.....

HFFFFF.....

TH-TH-THERE'S NO WAY A PACKAGE WOULD COME THIS LATE!

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

YOU'RE HOME, AREN'T YOU?

WE'RE BOTH GONNA HAVE A PROBLEM IF I DON'T DELIVER TH S PACKAGE, YOU KNOW.

URA-SAAAN.
MATSU-URA-SAAAN
MATSU-URA-SAAAN.
MATSU-URA-SAAAN
MATSU-URA-SAAAN
MATSUURA-SAAAN...
MATSU-URA-SAAAN
MATSU-URA-SAAAN.
MATS-UR-SAA
MATSU-URA-SAAAN
MATSU-URA-SAAAN.
MATSU-URA-SAAAN.
MATSU-URA-SAAAN
MATSU-URA-SAAAN
MATSU-URA-SAAAN.
MATSU-URA-SAAAN.
MATSU-URA-SAAAN
TSU-RA-AN
MATSU-URA-
EEEK!! I WON'T LET'CHA IN!
MATSU-URA-SAAAN. I'M ALREADY INSIDE.

CHAPTER 2 END

AT ONE POINT, HE WAS INFLUENCED BY SOMETHING HE SAW ON THE INTERNET AND STARTED RESPONDING TWICE—"I SEE, I SEE"—WHEN IN CONVERSATION HE GOT THE NICKNAME "EMIL" AFTER THAT

WHEN SOMEONE WENT AROUND TELLING PEOPLE THAT THE MOLES ON YOSHIKI'S FACE FORMED THE SAME PATTERN AS THE BIG DIPPER, HE GOT CALLED "KENSHIRO."

CHAPTER 3

SKRT SKRT SKRT SKRT SKRT SKRT

SKRR

SO YESTERDAY IN CLUB...

YOU CAN NEVER SWEEP UP THAT LAST BIT OF DUST, CAN YA?

JUST PUSH IT INTO ONE OF THE CORNERS!

HEEEY, ANY OF Y'ALL UNDER-STAND THE HOMEWORK FOR MATH I?

YOU GOTTA ACTUALLY PICK 'EM UP AND MOVE 'EM!

HEEEY! STOP DRAGGIN' THEM DESKS AROUND!

COME ON...

...YOSHIKI.

I'M BEGGIN' YA HERE!

NAW, DON' WANNA ...

COME ON! IT'LL JUST TAKE A LITTLE BIT!

WHYYY? NOOO!

I ALREADY TOLD YA— I DON'T WANNA MESS WITH ANY CREEPY STUFF.

HEY, WHAT'S GOIN' ON? YER BEIN' AWFULLY LOUD, MAKI...

WHAAAAAAAAA!?

OH. YUUKI.

WHAT HAP-PENED?

WELL, YA KNOW HOW I ALWAYS TAKE THE MOUNTAIN PATH FROM THE EASTERN GATE TO GET BACK TO ASHIDORI?

YEAH, SURE.

EXACTLY. THERE'S ANOTHER WAY THROUGH THE FOREST THAT I DON'T NORMALLY USE, AND NOW I GOTTA GO THROUGH THERE.

BUT THE TUNNEL THERE'S UNDER CONSTRUCTION, AIN'T IT?

BUT THAT FOREST PATH IS SPOOKY AS HELL!

. AND THAT'S WHY YOU WANT ME TO GO WITH YOU

. HAAH THAT'S STUPID

BUT IT BEIN' SCARY AIN'T THE HALF OF IT...

I CAN'T LOOK INTO THE FOREST.

...MY EYES CAN'T MOVE AWAY FROM THE PATH IN FRONT OF ME.

IT'S LIKE...

REALLY GOTTA WONDER WHAT THAT'S ALL ABOUT!

WHOA! FREAKY !!

HUH ...?

SO...

...IS IT THAT YOU CAN'T LOOK INTO THE FOREST 'COS IT'S SCARY?

COURSE! I THREW OUT A BUNCHA TRASH.

DIDJA FINISH CLEANIN', AH-CHAN?

BUT IT'S LIKE, EVEN IF I TRY TO LOOK INTO THE FOREST, BEFORE I KNOW IT, MY EYES ARE BACK ON THE ROAD.

NAW.

WASN'T SCARY AT FIRST, Y'KNOW?

AND THAT'S WHY I'M ASKIN' YA TO COME WITH ME, YOSHIKI!

THAT'S WHAT REALLY GOT ME SPOOKED.

A TEST OF COURAGE ? THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO DO THAT ARE THE STUPID TOURISTS WHO COME THROUGH EVERY NOW AN' THEN.

YOU CAN THINK OF IT AS A TEST OF COURAGE!

NOPE

SOUNDS WAY TOO SCARY

YOU WERE MOVIN' LIKE YOU WERE DOIN' AN RTA SPEEDRUN.

NAW

BUT YER SERIOUSLY GOOD AT TESTS OF COURAGE. YOU WERE AMAZIN' THE LAST TIME WE WENT.

SOUNDS REAL INTERESTIN' TO ME!

WELL, THAT'S... 'COS I WAS RUSHIN' TO GET TO A TOILET.

I WAS PLAIN SCARED AS SHIT...

I WANNA GO TOO!

HUH?

HUH?

YOU PASSED OUT FOR TWO HOURS WHEN YA SAW THAT HORROR MOVIE...

YA... YA SURE 'BOUT THAT?

YER THE WORST AT HANDLIN' THESE THINGS, HIKARU.

OH YEAH. WELL, I'VE GOTTEN BETTER WITH THAT STUFF LATELY.

AIN'T THAT RIGHT, YOSHIKI!?

OH.

YEAH.

ALL RIGHT, THEN. SO IT'LL BE YOSHIKI, YUUKI, ASAKO...

...AN' HIKARU.

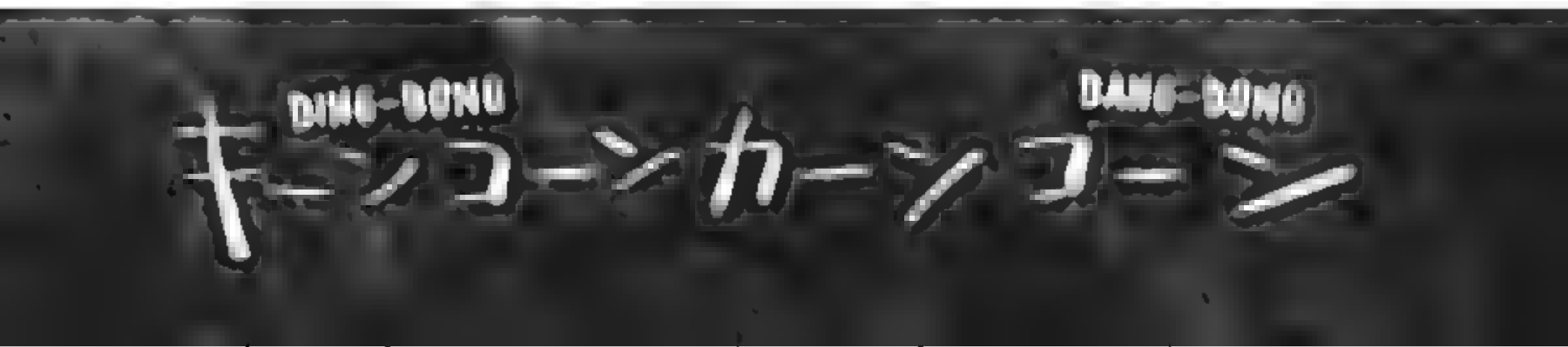
I GUESS IT'S SAFER IF WE'RE ALL TOGETH-ER

I'M SO GLAD Y'ALL ARE COMIN'. FOR REAL...

OKAY.

SEE YA AT THE EASTERN GATE AFTER SCHOOL.

WELL, DON'T BE TOO SURPRISED IF YOU SEE POLICE CARS AROUND.
ALL RIGHT.
THEY'RE SAYIN' THERE WAS NO FOUL PLAY INVOLVED, BUT THE WHOLE THING'S CAUSIN' A STIR.
SO THERE WAS A DEAD BODY FOUND OVER BY KUBITACHI THIS MORNIN'.


DANG-DONG
DANG-DONG

YA SCARED, YUU-CHAN?

HUH? NOT REALLY... I'M NOT SCARED...

NOT 'BOUT THIS, AT LEAST. BUT THAT STUFF HARA WAS TALKIN' 'BOUT IN HOMEROOM BEFORE WE LEFT...

THEY SAY SHE STUFFED HER OWN HAND DOWN HER THROAT ...

...AN' THAT'S HOW SHE DIED.

YEAH... PRETTY NASTY WAY TO DIE, RIGHT?

...IT MIGHT BE...

JUDGIN' FROM THE HOUSE THE POLICE CARS WERE COMIN' FROM...

WE DON'T KNOW IF THAT'S TRUE OR NOT, THOUGH...

JUST.

...THAT OLD LADY'S BEEN ACTIN' A LITTLE FUNNY FOR A WHILE NOW...

YEAH.

NOTHIN' WE COULDA DONE 'BOUT THAT.

BUT THERE WAS A WOMAN NEAR THE POLICE CARS... SHE MIGHT'VE BEEN THE OLD LADY'S DAUGHTER

SHE BROKE DOWN CRYIN'

I FEEL BAD FOR HER

THERE'S BEEN AN AWFUL LOT OF SCARY THINGS HAPPENIN' IN THIS VILLAGE THESE DAYS. IT'S GETTIN' TA BE TOO MUCH

OH.

THAT THE FOREST PATH OVER THERE?

DON'T LEAVE ME BEHIND, OKAY!?
I MIGHT DIE, Y'ALL! I MIGHT DIE!
LET'S GET IN THERE ALREADY.
NNNH, IT'S SCARY!
OH MAAAN!
I JUST CAN'T!
YEAH... GUESS THAT IS CREEPY.

HOW 'BOUT THAT.
...I GUESS... THAT WENT TOTALLY NORMALLY...
WASN'T SPOOKY AT ALL.
I WAS ABLE TO LOOK INTO THE FOREST NO PROBLEM TOO.
ZSH
WHAT?
NOTHIN' HAPPENED.
GOOD...
BE CAREFUL ON YER WAY BACK!
THANKS, YOU GUYS!
IT WAS ALL IN MY HEAD.
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH BZZH
ZSH
ZSH

ZSH

BZZH BZZH BZZH

AH. A BUG BIT ME.

LEAST IT'S COOL IN HERE.

ZSH

BZZH BZZH BZZH

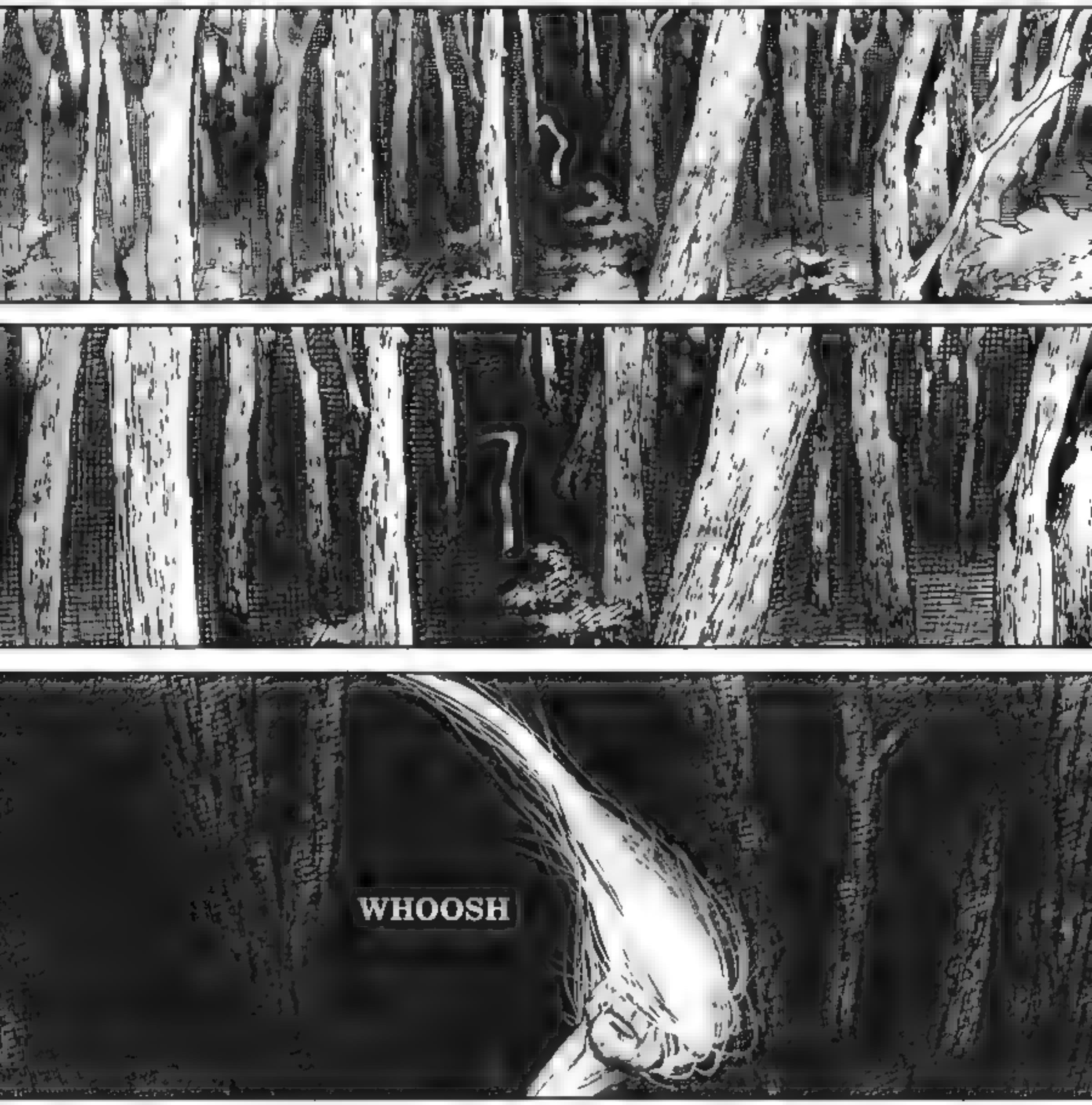
IT'S A PAIN HAVIN' TO GET BACK THROUGH THIS FOREST PATH.

A REAL HASSLE IS WHAT IT IS!

UH...
WHAT?
A LESS-THAN SIGN?

SMAT

?
THE HELL IS THAT ...?


WHOOSH

IT'S...

...SWIN-GIN'...

...ITS HEAD...

...AT ME—

YO-SHIKI.

AH.

TH-THAT AIN'T GOOD.

NO GOOD.

FWIP

IT'S COMIN' FOR YA NOW.

CAN'T HAVE YA DOIN' THAT.

AH, DANG.

YOU SAW IT, HUH?

COME HERE.

VWSH

PROLOGUE

YAAH! WHAT!? WHAT WAS THAT SOUND JUST NOW!?

!?

WHAT!? WAIT! WHERE ARE YA GOING!?

WHAT!?

HUH?

AH-CHAN!?

HM...

UH... AH...

HEY! C'MON!

HI-KARU!

YOU ALL RIGHT!?

DASH

AH-CHAN!

NH...

WH—

WHAT'D YOU DO?

THAT WAS KINDA... WEIRD...

HEY.

YOU GOT A TISSUE ON YA?

NOPE

AHH. -SNIFF!- JUST A NOSE-BLEED...

-SHNK!-

SO I SMASHED IT UP AND PUT IT INSIDE ME.

THAT THING TRIED TO STICK TO YA.

...DON'T LOOK AT ANYTHIN' BUT ME.

OH.

ANYWAY, YOSHIKI...

AHH, I GUESS I SUCKED IT UP? OR SLURPED IT UP? SOMETHIN' LIKE THAT...

BUT IT PUT UP A FIGHT AND MADE MY NOSE BLEED. HA-HA.

THE ONLY THING YA GOTTA LOOK AT IS ME.

AND THE ONLY THING THAT SHOULD STICK TO YA IS ME.

THEY FOLLOW YOU WHEN YA LOOK AT 'EM.

THOSE THINGS'RE LONELY, Y'KNOW?

OKAY ...?

OH!

THEY'RE OUT!

ALL RIGHT! STOP STRETCHIN' OUT MY SHIRT.

YOU AIN'T GONNA GET IT.

JUST DON'T LOOK.

IF YOU DO LOOK AT SOMETHIN', TELL ME.

I HEARD SOME KINDA LOUD POP, THOUGH...

MAYBE A SCARE CANNON MISFIRED?

NOTHIN' REALLY HAPPENED, THOUGH.

HUH!?

YER BLEEDIN'!

YEAH. I JUST TRIPPED ALONG THE WAY.

HEY, SORRY FOR RUNNIN' OFF AND LEAVIN' YOU TWO BEHIND...

YER NOT HURT EITHER, YOSHIKI?

NO, I'M FINE.

OH... I GUESS THAT'S WHAT IT SOUNDED LIKE TO EVERYONE ELSE.

THAT EERIE FEELIN' I WAS GETTIN' FROM THE FOREST PATH IS GONE NOW.

...DID THEY CANCEL EACH OTHER OUT?

IF YA REALLY LIKE SOMEONE, YA GOTTA MARRY 'EM QUICK-LIKE.

HIKARU.

...WILL TAKE 'EM INTO THE MOUN-TAINS.

UNUKI-SAMA...

WHAT'LL HAPPEN IF I DON'T?

I'LL JUST GET MARRIED LIKE NORMAL.

IT PROMISED NOT TO LAY A HAND ON OUR FAMILY MEMBERS...

...SO THEY'LL BE SAFE AS LONG AS YA TAKE 'EM AS YOUR BRIDE.

IF YOU GOT YOURSELF A LOVER, YOU GOTTA HURRY AN' MARRY 'EM.

IT'S AN INDOU FAMILY RULE.

IT'S LONELY, SO INSTEAD OF TAKIN' ONE OF OUR FAMILY MEMBERS...

...IT TAKES THE PERSON WE CHERISH MOST.

WHY DOES IT TAKE THEM AWAY?

THAT WOMAN WHO DUMPED YER OLD MAN—AND A WHOLE BUNCHA OTHERS BEFORE HER—ARE ALL ALIVE AN' WELL...

JUST AN OL' WIVES' TALE, THOUGH!

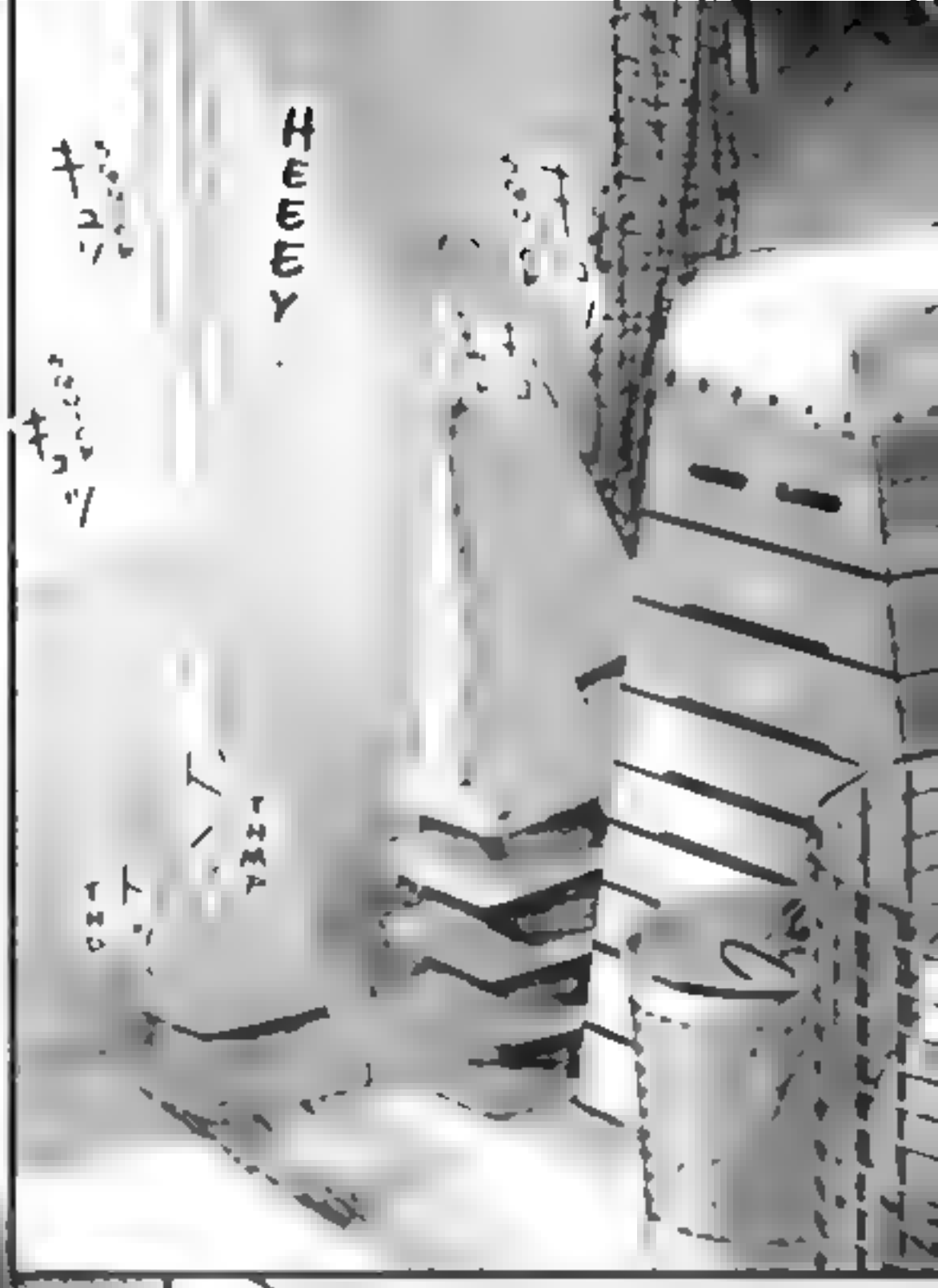
I DON'T REMEMBER THAT ALL TOO WELL...

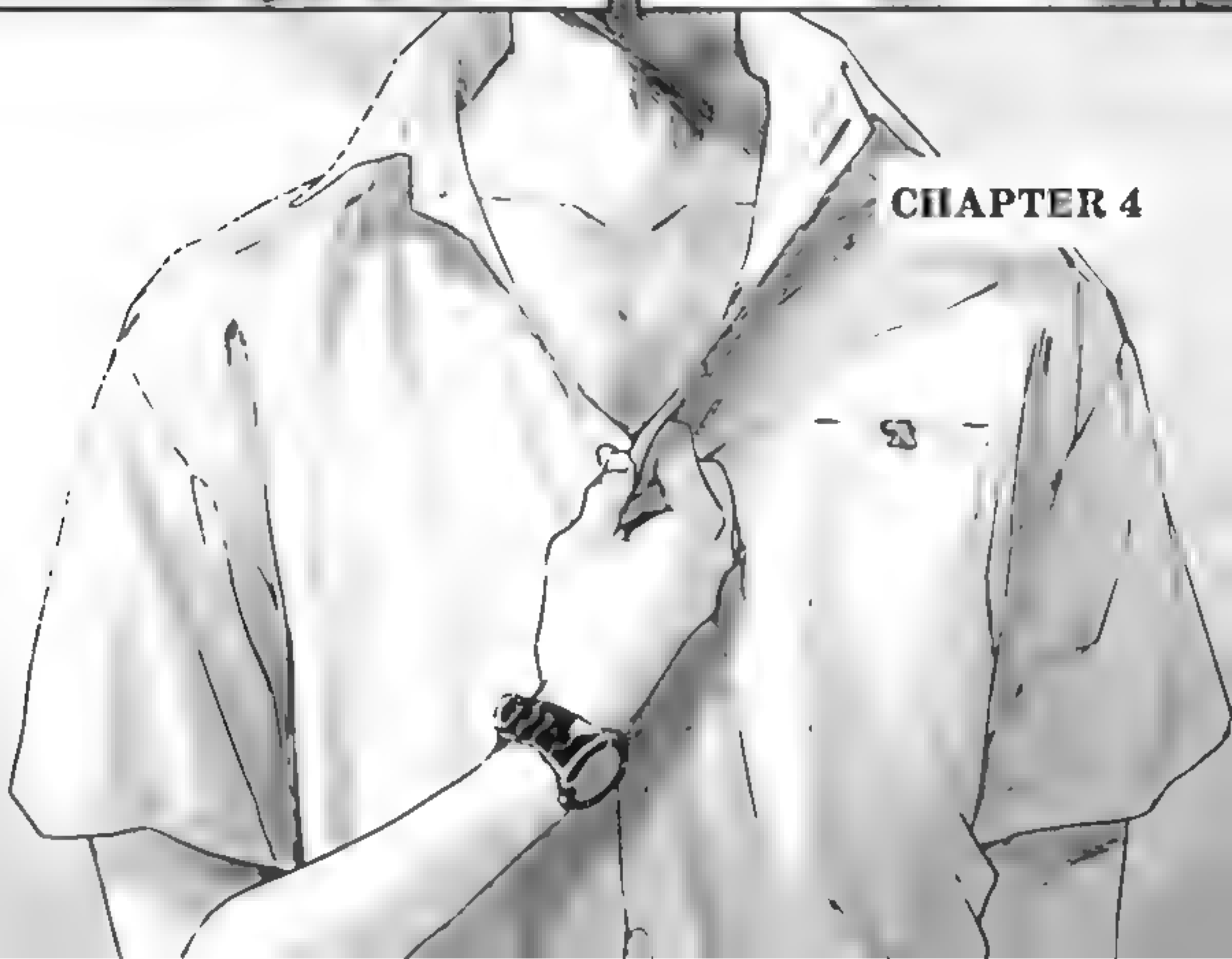
...BUT EVEN IF I WON'T BE TAKIN' YOU, I CAN ALWAYS BE WITH YOU NOW.

I'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE SURE NO ONE ELSE TAKES YOU...

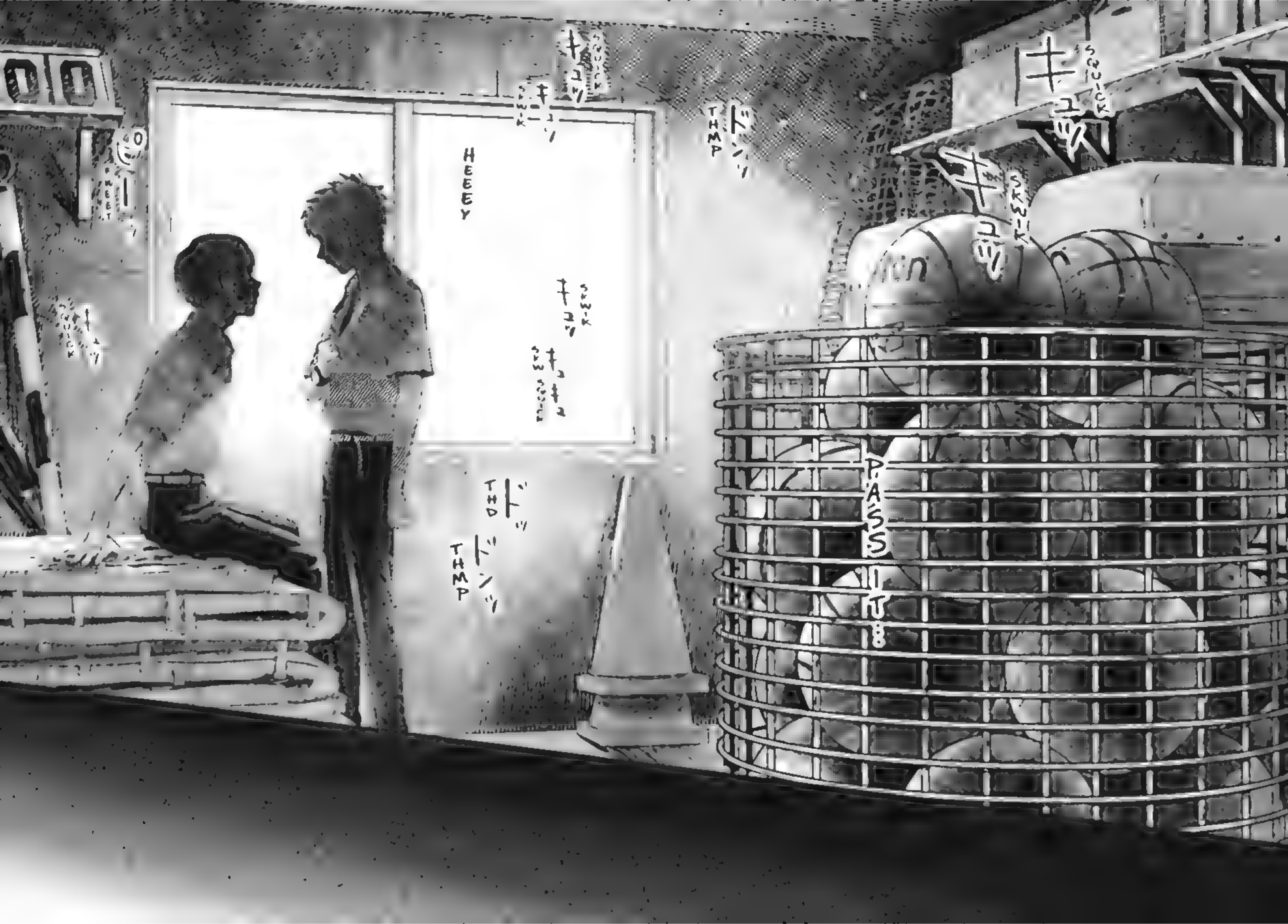
CHAPTER 3 END

STRENGTH IN ARM WRESTLING





CHAPTER 4



キュッ
SQUICK
キュッ
SKWIK
キュッ
ドンッ
THMP
HEEEY
キュッ
SKWIK
キュッ
SKW SQUICK
ドッ
THD
ドンッ
THMP
PASS IT!!

WHUMP

YYYYY
YYYYY
YYYYY
YYYYY
YYYYY
😟😟😟!

SORRY
YYYYYY
YYYYYY
YYYYYY
YYYYYY
YYYYYY

...GLESS YA OUGHTTA SEE THE NURSE.

YOSHI-KI...

WOW...

THAT WAS A POWERFUL SPIKE...

I'M SUPER-SORRY ...

HOO BOY, I SERIOUSLY SUCK AT ALL BALL SPORTS 'CEPT FOR SOCCER.

OOF. YOU GOT PRETTY SCRAPED UP THERE.

HUH? OH, FOR REAL?

ASAKO'S STILL SERVIN' UP SOME MEAN KILLS WITH THE BALL.

THAT THING WARPED SPACE-TIME ITSELF—LIKE THE SPACE AROUND IT WAS ALL SQUASHED UP.

I...

...HARDLY FEEL ANY PAIN AT ALL.

IS IT S'POSED TO?

IT DOESN'T HURT?

.....

...BUT YOUR NOSE SURE DOES BLEED A BUNCH.

OH YEAH. BACK AT THE FOREST PATH...

HUH?

...THEN YOU AIN'T NO PERFECT COPY AT ALL, ARE YA...

I TOLD YOU ALREADY. I PUT IT INSIDE—

I STILL DON'T GET IT.

WHAT HAPPENED BACK THERE...?

...I'LL SHOW YA WHAT'S INSIDE ME!

OH, I KNOW!

IF YA WANT, AFTER SCHOOL...

PASS
THUD
HEY
POP
THIS
MAN, WHAT THE HECK?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOIN' ON.
.. FEELS SORTA PERVY .. WHAT KINDA SITUATION IS THIS? HEH-HEH...

WHY DON'CHA TRY STICKIN' YER HAND IN?

HUH?

...WH...

...WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?

HEEK!

AH.

EUGH ...

FEELS REAL WEIRD...

WHAT'S THIS SENSATION? MY HAND WENT INTO SOMETHIN'.

WAGH !?

UH.

WELL...

IT'S LIKE RAW CHICKEN COVERED IN MARINADE.

IT'S COOL INSIDE.

LIKE WHAT?

YOU'RE... KIND OF WARM.

HEY.

TRY BRINGIN' YER HAND UP MORE.

FEELS NICE.

BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE FELT SOMETHIN' ALIVE INSIDE ME.

PEEL

PEEL

PEEL

GULP

IT'S THE SAME AS SOMEONE PATTIN' YER HEAD.

I'VE NEVER BEEN TOUCHED THERE BEFORE...

HN

AH!

AHHN. FEELS GOOD RIGHT THERE...

TH-THIS FEELS GOOD TO YA?

YANK

I'M BEIN' PULLED IN!

AHH!

GNH!

AHH!

ZHLRP

HAA HAA HAA HAA

THAT SCARE YOU?

SHIT..

AH HA HA HA HA HA!

THMP

C'MON! IT AIN'T DIRTY OR ANY-THIN'.

RUB

...

I'LL GIVE YA A SHOW THAT'LL GET YER NOSE BLEEDIN'!

JUST FOOLIN'!

FLAP

OH

MY SHIRT?

HUH?

WAIT... WHAT'S WRONG ...?

SST

FWIP

SLAP

AH

AH

AH

SO YA DON'T LIKE THAT...

SHRFF

WHOA!

MAYBE...

YOU SOME KINDA BAR-BARIAN OR SOME-THIN'?

HURRY'N GET YOUR CLOTHES BACK ON.

HEH. HA HA!

PING

17:35

1 new message

7 40
4G
Kaoru
Get super-spicy wasabi mustard
17 35
Or st like it
17 35
We ran out
17 35
→
あ
か
さ
う
た
な
は
ABC
ま
や
ら
PRESERVED FOOD
DUN DUN
TI TI TI TI

THERE IT IS.

SUPER-SPICY WASABI MUSTARD

SHE'S A FIRST-YEAR IN MIDDLE SCHOOL, BUT HER TASTE IN FOOD IS LIKE AN OLD MAN.

SHE EATS A LOTTA NASTY-TASTIN' STUFF LIKE THAT.

I'LL GO AHEAD AND BUY IT...

5 X POINTS TODAY IS 5 X THE POINTS! 5 TIMES! 5 TIMES!

OH, AND SHE LIKES THIS TOO.

BEEP

BEEP

BEEP

MY GOOD-NESS!

WELL, IF IT AIN'T THE TSUJI-NAKAS' BOY!

HM?

HI.

OH.

I GUESS SHE GOT THAT CITY SCHOOLIN' TOO, HUH...? SPEAKIN' OF, YER MOTHER AND FATHER WERE FIGHTIN' BEFORE, WEREN'T THEY? EVERYONE'S WORRIED, SINCE THEY WERE ARGUIN' SO LATE INTO THE NIGHT, Y'KNOW? MUST BE A LOT FOR YA, HUH, YOSHIKI-KUN? I'M HERE FOR YA IF YA DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO, Y'HEAR? OH, THAT REMINDS ME—YA WORKIN' HARD IN PHOTO CLUB? MY SON WAS IN TRACK AND FIELD BACK IN THE DAY AND GOT SECOND PLACE AT ONE OF HIS MEETS...

IS YER LITTLE SISTER DOIN' ALL RIGHT? WELL, I HEARD SHE AIN'T BEEN GOIN' TO SCHOOL NONE TOO OFTEN, BUT...I'M WORRIED 'BOUT THE YAMAZAKIS TOO. PEOPLE'RE SAYIN' SOMETHIN' ABOUT THEIR BOY NOT BEIN' ABLE TO WAKE UP IN THE MORNIN' AN' SUCH, BUT Y'KNOW, EVERYONE HAS TROUBLE GETTIN' GOIN' IN THE MORNIN', RIGHT? KAORU-CHAN'S IN HER FIRST YEAR OF MIDDLE SCHOOL, AIN'T SHE? YA CAN'T BE SOFT ON HER. NO, SIRREE. AH WELL, YER MOTHER IS FROM TOKYO, AFTER ALL...

AH

RIGHT.

THAT'LL BE 700 YEN.

OH, AND YOSHIKI-KUN?

YOU SHOULD CUT YER BANGS.

ALL RIGHT!

HERE'S YER CHANGE!

PRESS

CAAAAW...

MY BIKE...

CAW...

CAW...

スーパー

VSHHH

LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE MOVED IT.

CAAW...

CAAW...

CAAW...

CAW...

CAAW...

YOUNG MAN.

YOU NEED TO STOP RIGHT THIS INSTANT.

DON'T.

DON'T DO IT.

I KNOW YA MUST BE WONDERIN' WHAT THIS RANDOM HOUSEWIFE IS GOIN' ON ABOUT.

WELL, YER CLOSE TO SOMETHIN' INCREDIBLY DANGEROUS...

DON'T TELL ME YA CAN'T SENSE THAT.

EH?

UH.

UMM ...

OH, I'M NOT TALKIN' ABOUT YER BIKE.

CHAPTER 4 END

IF YA KEEP THIS UP...

...YOU'LL MIX...

YA GOTTA GET AWAY RIGHT THIS INSTANT.

SO IT FEELS LIKE RAW CHICKEN IN MARINADE, HUH ?
WELL, WHADDAYA KNOW

NOZOMI SUPERMARKET
A SUPERMARKET IN
KIBOGAYAMA TOWN THERE'S
A DRUGSTORE NEXT TO IT
THIS IS THE
ONLY PLACE
THAT SELLS WASABI
MUSTARD.
...

CHAPTER 5

"MIX"...?

WAIT.

ER.

UH...

UM...

WHO ...?

UM...

MM...IT'S HARD TO EXPLAIN...

YA WON'T BE HUMAN ANYMORE IF YA GET TOO MIXED IN WITH SOMETHIN' FROM THE OTHER SIDE...

IT'S JUST THAT I CAN SEE MORE THAN THE AVERAGE PERSON...

WAIT!

I REALLY AM JUST A HOUSEWIFE WHO HAPPENED TO BE PASSIN' BY!

OHH!

DON'T BE SCARED!

HAAAH...

YA KNOW THE MOUNTAINS OVER IN KUBITACH!? THAT AREA THAT'S OFF-LIMITS?

WELL, FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER, I GOT THIS NO-GOOD FEELIN' FROM THAT PLACE.

I JUST KNEW THERE WAS SOMETHIN' REAL BAD OUT THERE.

.....

I AIN'T LYIN'...

"WHERE DID IT GO? WHAT'S HAPPENED? I'M SCAAARED!" I WAS IN A RIGHT STATE, WONDERIN' WHAT WAS GOIN' ON.

BUT...

...RECENTLY, THAT NO-GOOD FEELIN' JUST UP AN' DISAPPEARED ALL OF A SUDDEN.

LET'S PROTECT OUR FRIEND'S SMILING FACES AND

SHE MEANS THE MOUNTAINS WHERE HIKARU WENT MISSIN'.

...HUH...? HOW...?

DO YOU KNOW SOMETHIN'?

BUT IT'S COME TO BE BY YER SIDE, HASN'T IT?

...

...BUT YOU HAVE YER REASONS, DON'T YOU?

I'M SERIOUS... I'VE NEVER SEEN SOMETHIN' LIKE THIS BEFORE...

I'LL TELL YA EVERYTHIN' I KNOW...

IF YOU'D LIKE TO TALK ABOUT IT, CONTACT ME HERE.

I DON'T.

NOT REALLY ANY-WAY.

BUT I DO KNOW THAT THINGS WON'T GO WELL FOR YA IF YA KEEP DOIN' WHAT YER DOIN'.

TH ANK .Y .OU.

BZZH
Rie Kure
Send a message

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

HAAAAH…

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

INDOU

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

HIKARU'S IN THE BACK SLEEPIN' LIKE THERE'S NO TOMORROW.

OH WE... COME

MY, THAT'S A LOVELY ONE THANK YOU!

HERE I BROUGHT A WATER-MELON.

KAITI KAITI KAITI

IS "HIKARU" HOME?

WHR R

CREAK

WHRR
...
...
ドカッ
THP

OW!

YOU JUST GONNA SIT THERE AND STARE AT ME? YER NOT GONNA WAKE ME UP?

YER DRESSED LIKE THE MAIN CHARACTER IN SOME OLD-SCHOOL VIDEO GAME.

YOU WUSS!

WHACK

AHHBAAAH!

DAAAAAA!

...GOT A WATER-MELON FROM ONE OF MY RELA-TIVES...

THEY WERE SHARIN' THEIR EXTRA.

HOORAY! I WON. DIDJA BRING SOMETHIN' WHEN YA GOT HERE EARLIER?

I'M THE BEST IN THE WORLD AT EATIN' THOSE THINGS!

HUH? A WATER-MELON!?

MY FAVOR-ITE!

...DIDN'CHA...?

YOU SAID SOME-THIN' LIKE THAT BEFORE TOO...

AND MAYBE I'LL SPIT OUT THE SEEDS LIKE A MACHINE GUN TOO!

I KNOW ...

I'M GONNA EAT IT LIKE THEY DO IN MANGA.

CHECK IT OUT! I'M GONNA EAT THIS MANGA-STYLE!

HEY, YUSUKE!!!

CRUNCH

シャリ

CRUNCH

シャリ

CRUNCH

シャリ

I SWALLOWED SOME SEEDS...

OH NO...

.....

I HEARD MY DADDY'S FRIEND ATE SOME WATERMELON SEEDS AN' TURNED INTO A WATERMELON-MAN WITH STRIPES ALL OVER HIS BODY.

THEY SAID HE HAD AN ACCIDENT ON THE JOB, BUT I DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT HAPPENED.

SPROUTIN' ANY HAIR DOWN THERE?

HE DIED WHEN WE WERE IN FIFTH GRADE...

HIKARU'S DADDY WAS STILL ALIVE BACK THEN.

YOSHIKI!

...EXACTLY THE SAME TIME OF YEAR AS WHEN HIKARU WENT TO THE MOUNTAINS...

AND IT WAS...

NO ONE USUALLY GOES THERE...

COME TO THINK OF IT, HIKARU'S DADDY WENT TO THOSE MOUNTAINS ONE DAY A WHILE BACK...

WAIT.

LIFT

MAMA CUT SLICES FOR US.

YA WANNA EAT SOME WATER-MELON?

SURE IS A NICE WATERMELON.

HUGE, AIN'T IT?

...SO, YOU *ACTUALLY* KNOW THE TASTE OF WATERMELON?

YEAH, I'VE EATEN IT 'BOUT TEN TIMES ALREADY.

I UPGRADED THE WAY I EAT 'EM TOO!

AH

HH...

CHOMP

CHOMP

CHOMP

WAIT, NO. EW...

MAYBE IT WAS KINDA AWESOME.

MOW MMBT MAHT !!?

GUESS I'M GONNA TURN INTO A WATERMELON-MAN NOW.

AHH, SWAL-LOWED THE SEEDS.

MNCH

GULP

NAW

I'M GOOD.

MAN, I'M BORED.

WANNA PLAY SOME *SMASH*?

DON'T REALLY FEEL LIKE IT.

REALLY? WELL, ALL RIGHT, THEN.

I'M GONNA GO AHEAD AN' NAP.

D-X C

I CAN'T GO ON ACTING LIKE THIS IS NORMAL...

Y'KNOW...

THANKS FOR THE WATERMELON TOO.

...I'M REALLY ENJOYIN' MYSELF. JUST BEIN' WITH YA IS ENOUGH FOR ME.

I DON'T KNOW.

I GUESS I JUST FEEL LIKE I WANNA BE UP-FRONT AND TELL YA THAT STUFF.

WELL, I'M NOT GONNA LIE TO YA.

...THE HECK? WHY'RE YA COMIN' OUT WITH THAT ALL OF A SUDDEN...?

IT'D BE GREAT IF I COULD DO THE SAME

WOUND UP SAWIN' LOGS, HUH...?

EYES ROLLED TO THE BACK OF YER HEAD AN' ALL.

ZZZZZZZZ...

...

THAT'S FROM OUR GRADE SCHOOL GRADUATION CEREMONY...

SO ME AN' HIKARU'VE ALWAYS BEEN TOGETHER.

HIKARU WAS THE ONLY KID IN THE VILLAGE AROUND MY AGE.

WHAT'S WITH THAT FACE?

WHAT A GOOF...

WHY'M I SO CALM ABOUT THIS?

WHY'M I SO CALM

BUT EVEN SO...

YOU'RE ALREADY DEAD.

THE HIKARU FROM THAT PICTURE IS GONE.

JUST ME...

WHY'M I SO CALM ABOUT THIS?

THE HIKARU FROM THAT PICTURE IS GONE.

NOW IT'S JUST ME... JUST ME...

〉Rie Kurebayashi

Send a message

〉

Hey

Read 12:50

YOSHIKI-CHAAAN! I GOT SOMETHIN' I'D LIKE YA TA BRING TO YER MAMA...

OH...

YES, MA'AM.

THMP

THMP

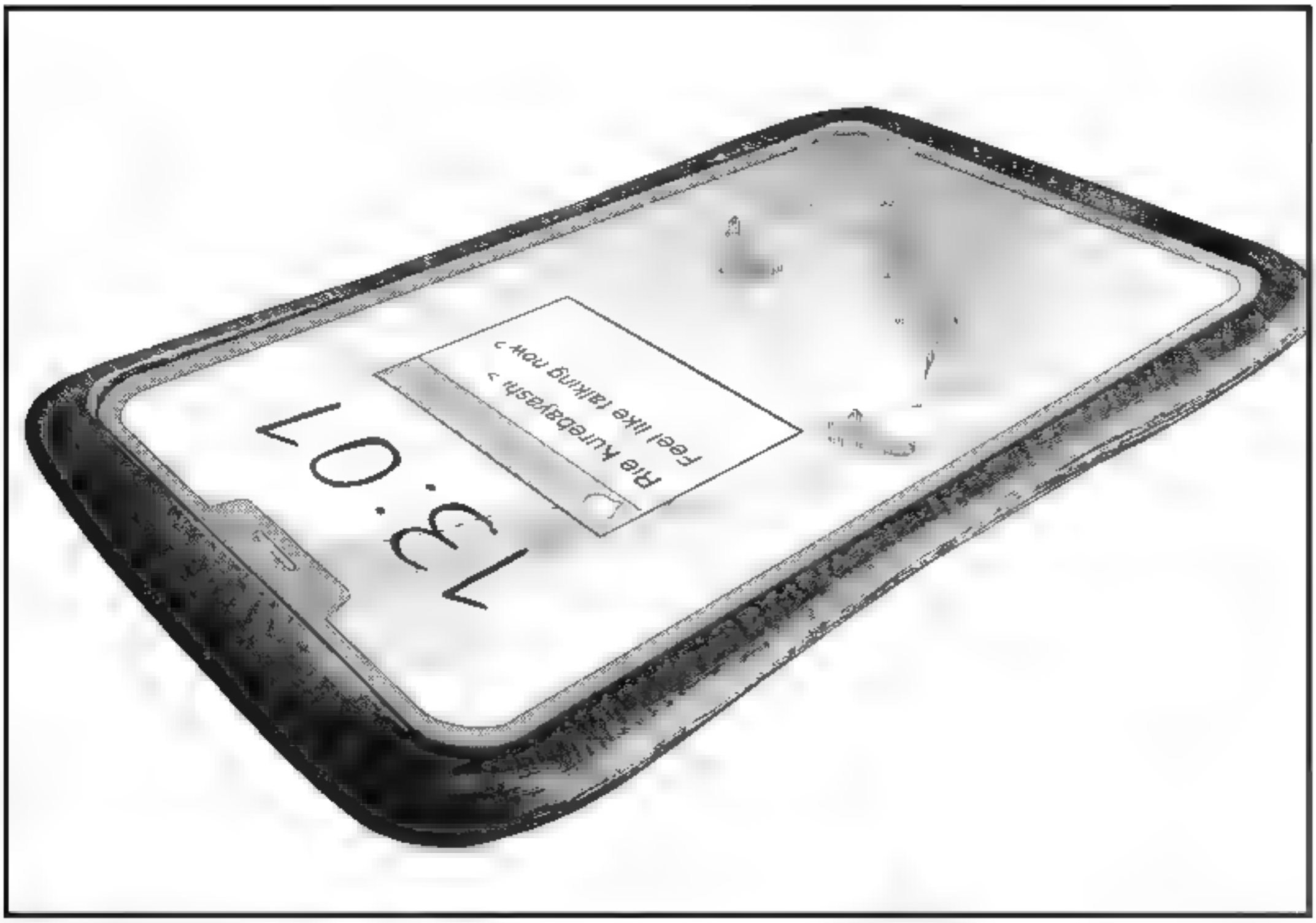
THMP

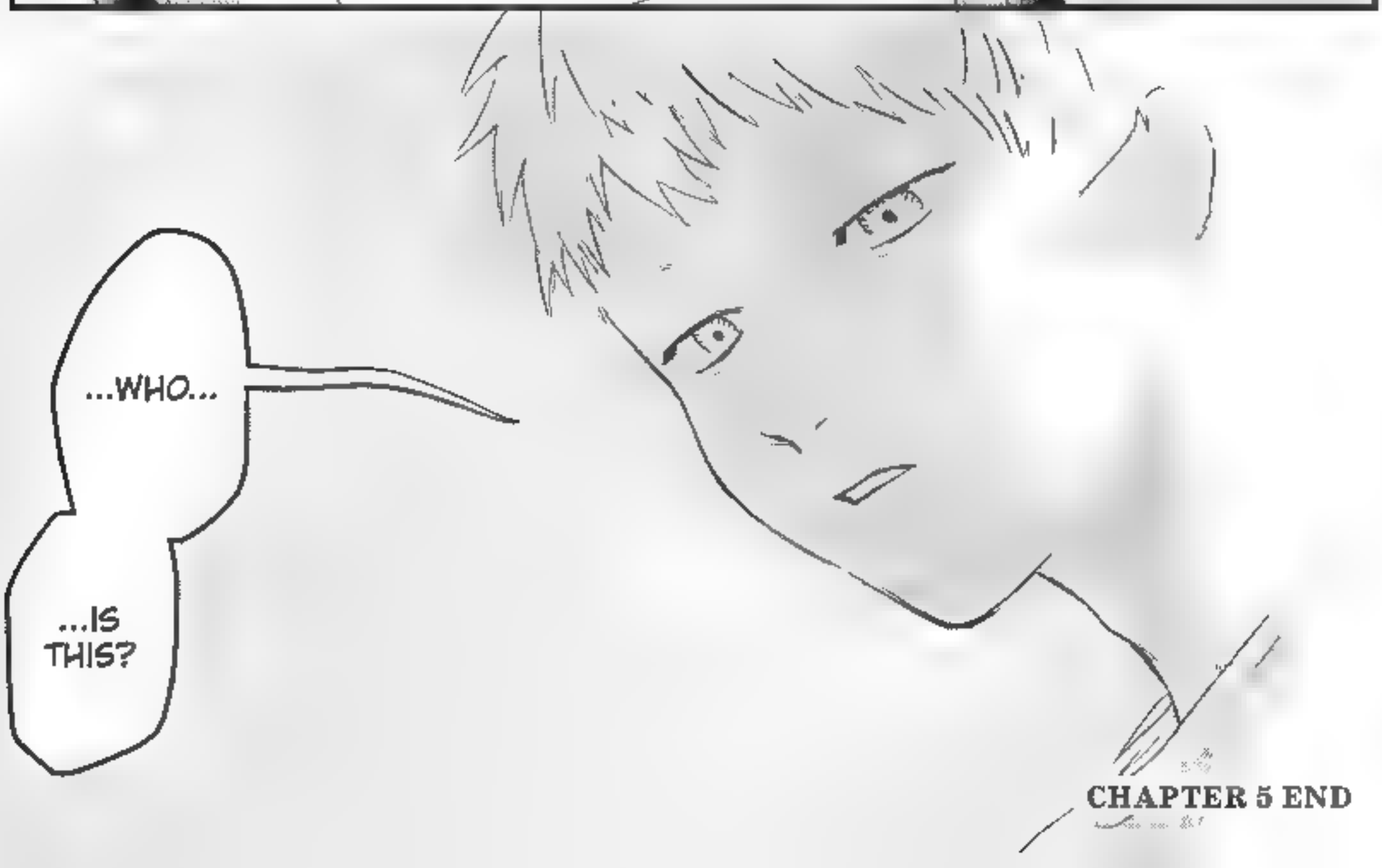
CREAK

YAWN..

HM...?

PING





CHAPTER 5 END

YOU EAT A LOT
HE SAYS THAT BUT HE EATS A FAIR AMOUNT TOO
EATS A LOT

YOSHIKI ON DAYS OFF
WILL SLEEP FOREVER IF LEFT TO IT
OFTEN WATCHES VIDEOS OF ANTS AND THINGS
HUNGRY
STRETCHED OUT BY HIKARU
CAN'T DO WITHOUT STOMACH MEDICINE ON HAND
GROWING PAINS

CHAPTER 6

> Rie Kurebayashi

BIP

Sorry !!

I'll be there in 5 min

OH!

THERE YOU ARE!

HAAH...

GOOD-NESS! I'M SO SORRY FOR GETTIN' HERE A LITTLE LATE...

IT'S HOT OUT, SO WHY DON'T WE FIND SOMEWHERE WE CAN SIT INSIDE AND GET A BITE? WOULD AMERICA BE ALL RIGHT WITH YA?

レストラン

CASUAL DINER AMERICA

IN

CLINK

SORRY FOR THE WAIT!

WELCOME!

HOW MANY WILL IT BE TODAY?

PARFAITS

AMERICA FRUIT MOUNTAIN

OH MY MY MY MY MY MY MY MY MY MY MY!

THEY HAVE A NEW JUMBO PARFAIT !!

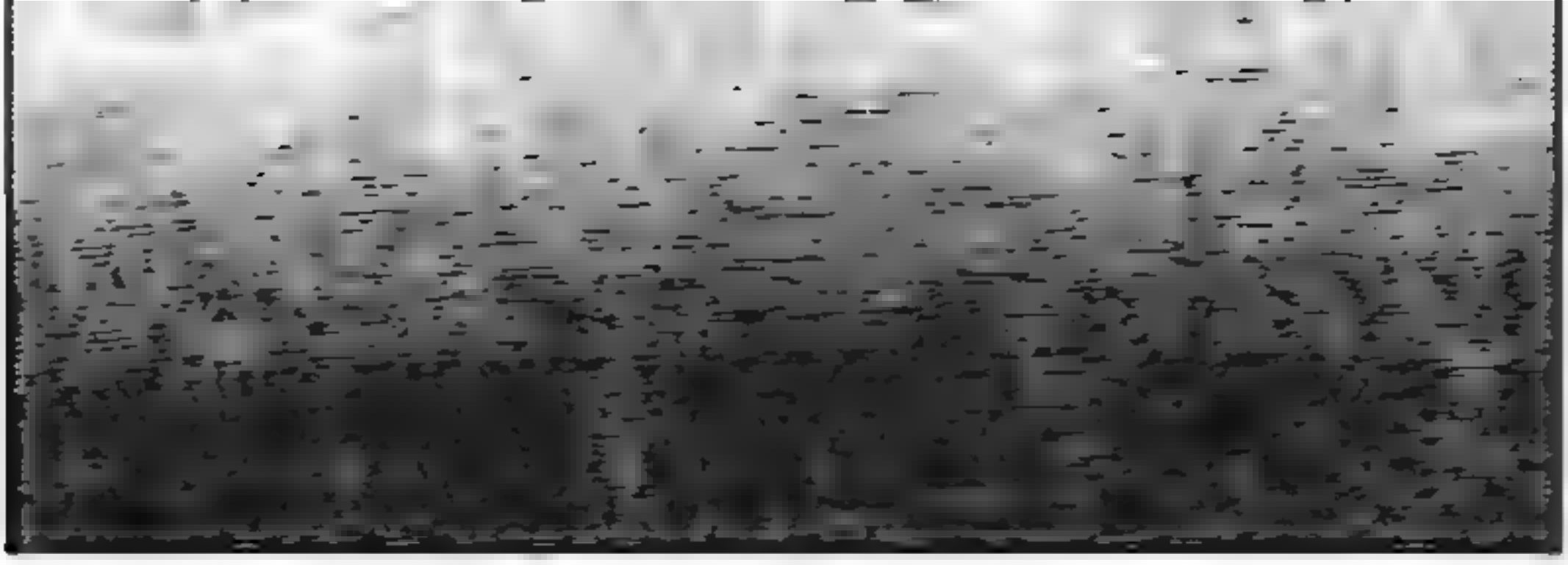
UM...

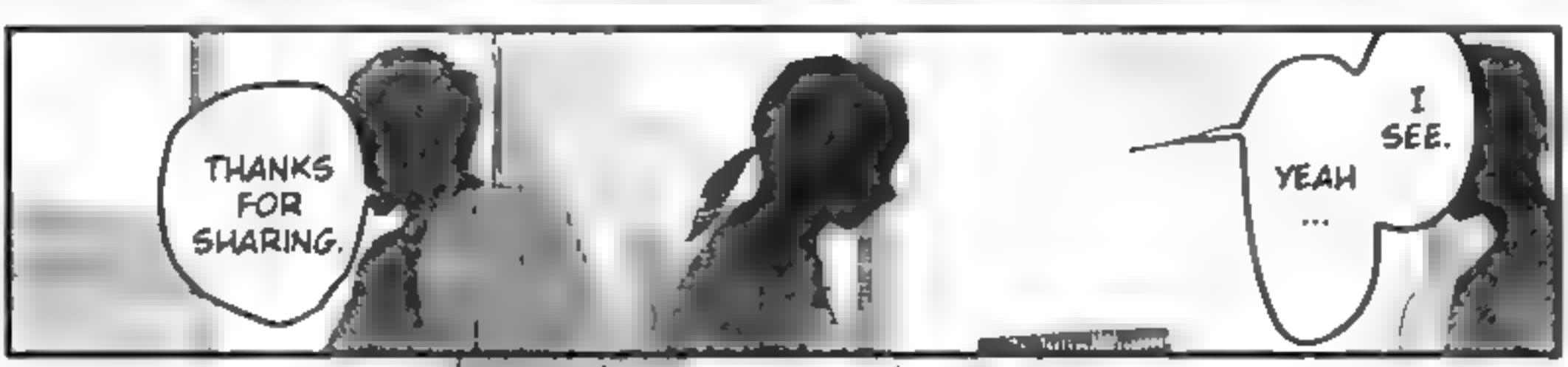
DO YA LIKE SWEETS?

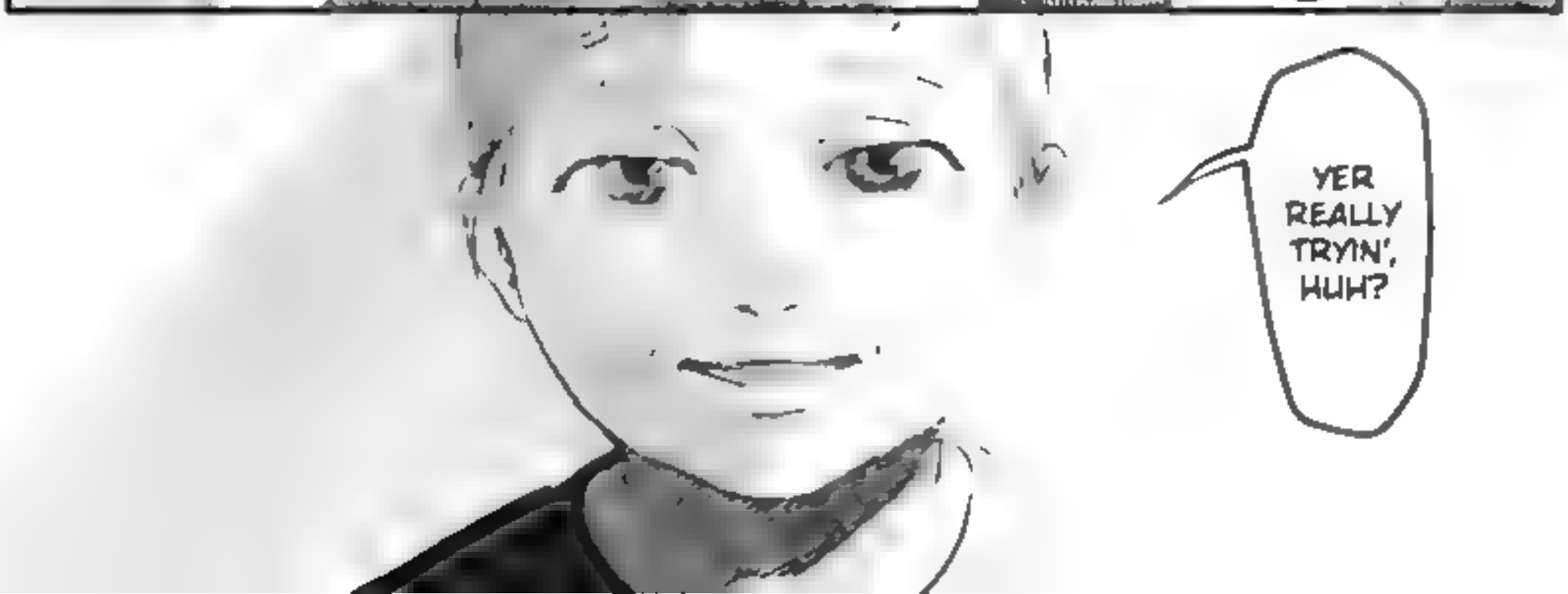
ORDER WHATEVER YA LIKE

CAN YA TELL ME?

SO WHAT HAPPENED?




THANKS FOR SHARING.
I SEE.
YEAH ...


YER REALLY TRYIN', HUH?

YOU SHOULDN'T BE FEELIN' LIKE YA DESERVE TO BE PUNISHED.

YA GOTTA KEEP IT TOGETHER.

WHY... DO YA SAY THAT?

FACT OF THE MATTER IS, WE'RE THE ONES WHO'RE DESPERATELY CLINGIN' ON TO THE DEAD.

BEATIN' YERSELF UP 'BOUT ALL THIS ONLY SERVES TO EASE THE GUILT YOU PUT ON YERSELF.

THE DEAD DON'T CARE A LICK.

"WE" ...?

BROUGHT THE MOOD DOWN MORE THAN I NEEDED TO THERE.

OH!

SORRY, JUST FORGET ABOUT ALL THAT!

HUH?

OH, NO, IT'S NOTHIN'.

I ASSUMED IT WAS A GIRLFRIEND OR SOMETHIN

ANY-WAY...

...YER CLOSE ENOUGH WITH THIS PERSON TO END UP MIXIN' WITH 'EM, RIGHT?

HAVE YA NOTICED THINGS'VE STARTED GETTIN' STRANGE AROUND THE TOWN AN' VILLAGE?

I'LL GET TO THE POINT.

SOME SORTA
DISTORTION HAS
THERE'S BEEN AN UPTICK IN
CIOUS INCIDENTS
ARE SLOWLY
I THINK ...
...WHATEVER "IT" IS THAT'S BECOME YER FRIEND IS HAVIN' AN EFFECT ON THINGS.
AS SOON AS
LARGER.

THAT'S HOW HUGE THAT THING IS...

...BUT IT MIGHT'VE BEEN WHAT WAS KEEPIN' THE DISTORTION CONTAINED IN THE MOUNTAINS ALL THAT TIME.

THIS IS JUST A GUESS...

THERE'S THAT UNNATURAL DEATH THAT HAPPENED NOT LONG AGO IN KUBITACHI TO CONSIDER AS WELL.

THERE'S SOMETHIN' TERRIBLY EERIE ABOUT THAT TOO...

I FEEL LIKE IT'S RELATED.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

AND SO I WAS LIKE

EXCUSE ME

...MY OLDEST SON LEFT THIS PLACE LONG AGO, THOUGH...

BUT MY MOTHER-IN-LAW AND DAUGHTER ARE HERE.

TO BE HONEST, IT'S ALL SO SCARY IT MAKES ME WANNA LEAVE THIS TOWN.

UM... SO BEFORE ...

.. YOU SAID "WE"...

BUT IT DIDN'T WORK OUT.

I■ THE END, HE LEFT MY SON WITH A SCAR ON HIS BODY THAT WILL NEVER HEAL FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE.

...MY LATE HUSBAND.

HE CAME BACK ONCE, A LONG TIME AGO.

I JUST WANTED TO BE WITH HIM AGAIN.

IT DIDN'T MATTER WHAT HE WAS.

THAT YA CAN'T KEEP BEIN' WITH YOUR FRIEND LIKE THIS.

...SOME PART OF YOU MUST KNOW IT TOO.

. YEAH, BUT WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO ABOUT IT...?

DRIP

DRIP

DRIP

AND...

I'M SORRY.

I DON'T WANT YA TO END UP LIKE ME...

FSHH

...I FIGURED YOU OUGHTTA KNOW...

...SO YOU CAN MOVE FORWARD.

ENJOY! ♪

HERE'S YER ORDER! ONE AMERICA MEGA-DELUXE MOUNTAIN PRESIDENT!

F
S
H
H

FSHH

HI SLIDE

SQUIK

SQUIK

SQUIK

I FORGOT SOMETHIN' IN HERE.

I'LL LEAVE AS SOON AS I FIND IT.

HUH? YER STILL HERE? THERE'S A FACULTY MEETIN' THIS AFTERNOON, SO EVERYONE CAN GO HOME EARLY.

YA DIDN'T KNOW?

MM, OKAY.

HIKARU'S BEEN LOOKIN' FOR YOU.

ガラガラ…
RATTLE RATTLE

SHUT

IF YOU SEE HIM, TELL HIM TA GO HOME WITHOUT ME.

...DON'T WANT TO KILL YOU...

I...

SO THAT MEANS HE COULD KILL ME.

THE DIS-TORTION IN THE VILLAGE.

THAT OLD LADY'S UNNATURAL DEATH.

SOME-THIN' TRAPPED IN THE MOUN-TAINS.

NOU-NUKI-SAMA.

...JUST WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU?

"HIKA-RU"...

SO YOU CAN MOVE FOR-WARD

SO YOU CAN MOVE FOR-WARD

AH! THERE YOU ARE!

AH!

YA DIDN'T KNOW THERE WAS A FACULTY MEETIN' TODAY?

LET'S HURRY AN' HEAD HOME.

HUH?

YOU IN A BAD MOOD OR SOMETHIN'?

...YOU MIND GOIN' HOME WITHOUT ME TODAY?

YEAH.

GLANCE
55

WHOA! HE'S NOT LAUGHIN' AT MY FUNNY FACE!

YOU JUST DON'T KNOW WHEN TO GIVE UP. LEAVE ME ALONE. SERIOUSLY.

SLAP

HEY, FOR REAL. WHAT'S GOIN' ON?

YER LOOKIN' PRETTY PALE.

...IS IT 'COS OF ME?

HA HA...

YOU FOR REAL?

OH. WHOA ...

I'M NOT REALLY MAD OR ANYTHIN'.

YA MAD AT ME?

WELL, I MEA■, YER CLEARLY ACTIN' WEIRD WITH ME.

HUH?

...WHAT'RE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT?

...WHAT?

THE HELL? YOU INTERROGATIN' ME NOW?

YER BEIN' CREEPY, MAN...

NO, YOU ARE MAD, THOUGH.

WHAT'S BEEN UP WITH YOU LATELY ...?

ARE YA HIDIN' SOMETHIN' FROM ME?

AND WHAT'S WITH YOU EXCHANGIN' MESSAGES WITH SOME STRANGER?

OKAY, THEN WHY DIDJA GO INTO TOWN LAST WEEKEND?

EITHER WAY...

...DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU EVERYTHIN'?

WHA ...!?

HOW'D YOU...?

...YER SAYIN' THAT LIKE IT WAS YOU BACK THEN.

BEFORE?

IF YOU'VE GOT SOMETHIN' YOU WANNA SAY TO ME, THEN—

BUT I'M PRETTY SURE WE USED TO TALK ABOUT ALMOST EVERYTHIN' BEFORE!

SO...

IT'S 'COS I'M NOT THE REAL HIKARU?

...SO THAT'S WHAT THIS IS ABOUT?

...I'M NOT ENOUGH FOR YOU.

THAT'S IT, AIN'T IT?

HEY...!

Y—

OF COURSE YER NOT!

YOU!

...BUT YOU'RE NOT HIKARU ...!!!!

THE WAY YOU SOUND, THE WAY YOU LOOK, THE WAY YOU TALK— IT'S ALL EXACTLY LIKE HIKARU...

YER RIGHT.

SORRY.

HAAAH...
HAAAH...

...JUST HOW IT IS.

THAT'S...

GRIP...

OW... HE'S HURTIN' ME...

'COS YOU'RE MY FIRST...

BUT I'M... USELESS WITHOUT YOU, YOSHIKI.

...WHAT'S REALLY MY FEELINGS OR HIS AT THIS POINT...

...UGH, I... JUST DON'T KNOW...

WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?

THIS IS SO HARD...

AND I CAN'T STOP MY FEEL-INGS !!!

I KNOW IT AIN'T RIGHT. BUT I STILL LIKE YOU!

SPLAT

YOU MUST KNOW IT TOO.

THAT YOU CAN'T KEEP BEIN' WITH YER FRIEND LIKE THIS.

VOLUME 1 END

AMERICA:
A FAMILY-STYLE CASUAL DINER IN KIBOGAYAMA TOWN THE DECOR AND DISHES ARE VAGUELY AMER CAN
SO IT'S 'WILL COME.' 'WILL HAVE COME AND THENT
HEY. YO. SHIKI.
'WILL HAVE BEEN COMING.'

YOSHIKI'S FAMILY
• MOTHER
• FATHER
• LITTLE SIS
HEY, PASS ME THE CLICK-ER.
HIS LITTLE SISTER'S A FIRST-YEAR IN MIDDLE SCHOOL. THEY GET ALONG WELL.

BONUS

HEY, YOU GONNA CUT YER BANGS?

'COS YA CAN'T RELAX UNLESS YER HIDIN' YOUR FACE, RIGHT?

THEY BOTHER ME, THOUGH. FEELS KINDA GLOOMY.

GEEZ, ENOUGH ALREADY. HOW MANY TIMES'RE YA GONNA TELL ME?

...I ALREADY TOLDJA I AIN'T CUTTIN' 'EM. THEY'RE CURTAINS FOR MY FACE.

AH, YEAH, GUESS SO...

IT'S THE FIRST TIME I'M TELLIN' YA, THOUGH!

YASABURO'S GRANNY SAID SOMETHIN' 'BOUT IT "MAKIN' THE VILLAGE DARKER."

THIS VILLAGE'S ALWAYS BEEN DARK.

EVERYONE IN THE VILLAGE JUST WON'T SHUT UP 'BOUT MY HAIR. THEY'RE ALWAYS ASKIN' ME TO CUT IT.

MAYBE THEY THINK MY BANGS ARE GONNA KILL MY PARENTS OR SOMETHIN'.

...WHAT DON'T YOU LIKE ABOUT YER FACE?

SO, LIKE...

YER MOLES AN' STUFF?

THAT TOO...

HUH? WHY'S THAT?

I THINK YOU'VE GOT A HANDSOME FACE.

HOW 'BOUT I CUT IT!!?

OH, I KNOW!

HEY, DON'T TOUCH ME—

YA CAN'T!

NEVER!!

SOME-TIME IN THE PAST

HEY, YA SURE YA GOT THIS?

HEY.

C'MON.

AH!

YA REALLY SURE?

HIKARU ...

HEY.

YEAH, IT'S FINE!

I-I THOUGHT THAT WOULD GO BETTER THAN IT DID... HA-HA...

OH MAN, THAT WAS REALLY BAD. SORRY...

NO?

AWW, ALL RIGHT.

BDMp

BDMp

.....

BUT...

...I BET THEY GET IN YER WAY WHEN YER STUDYIN'.

YOU'LL RUIN YER EYES IF YA KEEP THAT UP...

...THE HECK'RE THOSE?

GAB

YEP.

GAB

...CUTE BARRETTES?

GAB

THIS IS A JOKE, RIGHT?

YER GONNA LAUGH WHEN YA SEE ME WITH THESE ON.

I'M GIVIN' 'EM TO YA!

HOW 'BOUT USIN' 'EM TO PIN YER HAIR BACK?

I FOUND 'EM AT MION MALL.

THEY LOOK LIKE MINCE-ANIKI, DON'T THEY?

MINCE-ANIKI'S FACE IS MORE LIKE SOME SEASONED ACTOR, THOUGH.

HM? WHAT'S UP?

HI-KARU!

GLANCE

BUT THERE'S NO WAY I CAN WEAR THESE AT SCHOOL...

WHAT CLASS WE GOT NEXT?

HUH? GOOD QUES-TION

HEH.

SKWAK SKWAK SKWAK SKWAK

SKWAK SKWAK SKWAK SKWAK

SKWAK SKWAK SKWAK SKWAK

SKWAK SKWAK SKWAK SKWAK

Hikaru
Has sent you
image

ポコン PING

>Hikaru

20 10

Hey 20 10

Just noticed 20 10

Had this thing on all day and even went to club with it 20 11

Don't make me cuter than I already am 20.11

HM?

You gotta wear it!

OH.

SO HE LEFT IT ON ALL THIS TIME.

WHAT'RE YOU WEARIN'?

HEY...

.....

UH... SERI-OUSLY, WHAT IS THAT?

BONUS

END.

NO.

TCH!

THAT'S ACTUALLY A PRETTY POPULAR CHARACTER... YOU GONNA USE IT? GIVE IT TO ME

TRANSLATION NOTES

COMMON HONORIFICS

-san: The Japanese equivalent of Mr./Mrs./Miss. If a situation calls for politeness, this is the fail-safe honorific.
-sama: Conveys great respect; may also indicate that the social status of the speaker is lower than that of the addressee.
-kun: Used most often when referring to boys, this indicates affection or familiarity. Occasionally used by older men among their peers, but it may also be used by anyone referring to a person of lower standing.
-chan: An affectionate honorific indicating familiarity used mostly in reference to girls; also used in reference to cute persons or animals regardless of gender.
no honorific: Indicates familiarity or closeness, if used without permission or reason, addressing someone in this manner would constitute an insult.
-niisan, nii-san, aniki, etc: A term of endearment meaning "big brother" that may be more widely used to address any young man who is like a brother, regardless of whether he is related or not.

GENERAL

Hikaru: The Chinese character for Hikaru's name means "light."

PAGE 1

Cicadas: The cries of cicadas are pervasive throughout this volume. Cicadas' cries are infamously loud, and the sound is synonymous with summer in Japan.

PAGE 13

"Hikaru": Once Yoshiki realizes that the Hikaru in front of him is not the same friend he grew up with, he starts distinguishing between the two of them in his mind. The Japanese text reflects that shift by changing the writing system used for Hikaru's name. When Yoshiki refers to his friend, the text shows the Chinese character for Hikaru, but when he refers to the new "Hikaru," the text uses *katakana*, another one of Japan's three writing systems, which is primarily used for words with foreign origins.

Interestingly, when characters who are unaware of Hikaru's identity say his name, the text uses the Chinese character.

TRANSLATION NOTES
(CONTINUED)

PAGE 26

Katsu: *Katsu* refers to a meat cutlet that has been breaded and fried. The most well-known *katsu* is probably *tonkatsu*, or pork *katsu*. It is commonly eaten with rice as well as sold as a portable snack. The types of *katsu* sold here include *tonkatsu* (pork *katsu*) *roosukatsu* (pork loin *katsu*), ham *katsu*, *menchikatsu* (mincemeat *katsu*), and *gyuukatsu* (beef *katsu*). They also sell Japanese-style croquettes (*korokke*), which are breaded and fried mashed potatoes with ground meat.

PAGE 29

Mince-aniki: A nickname created by combining the words mincemeat and *aniki*. The reference to mincemeat likely comes from the fact that the butcher often feeds the cat. *Aniki*, or "older brother," is how delinquents or *yakuza* families are said to refer to the top dog, so animals with gruff-looking faces are sometimes lovingly referred to as *aniki*.

PAGE 35

Emil. Emil is a character from the short story "Das Nachtpfauenauge" by Hermann Hesse. This story is commonly part of the language arts curriculum in Japanese middle schools, making it familiar to many Japanese people. One of the most famous lines from this story starts with the character Emil saying something to the effect of "I see, I see," and it seems Yoshiki got his nickname from adopting that same verbal quirk.

Afterword

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR BUYING THIS BOOK. I PUT A LOT OF EFFORT INTO IT, SO IT WOULD MAKE ME HAPPY TO KNOW THAT YOU ENJOYED IT

MOKUMOKUREN

Next Volume Preview

...I'm sorry.

It looks...

...just like *he did, and yet...*

THE SUMMER

HIKARU

DIED

continues in Volume 2...

THE SUMMER HIKARU DIED

MOKUMOKUREN

1

TRANSLATION: AJANI OLOYE

LETTERING: ABIGAIL BLACKMAN

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

HIKARU GA SHINDA NATSU Vol. 1
©Mokumokuren 2022
First published in Japan in 2022 by KADOKAWA CORPORATION, Tokyo. English translation rights arranged with KADOKAWA CORPORATION, Tokyo through Tuttle-Mori Agency, Inc.

English translation © 2023 by Yen Press, LLC

Yen Press, LLC supports the right to free expression and the value of copyright. The purpose of copyright is to encourage writers and artists to produce the creative works that enrich our culture.

The scanning, uploading, and distribution of this book without permission is a theft of the author's intellectual property. If you would like permission to use material from the book (other than for review purposes), please contact the publisher. Thank you for your support of the author's rights.

Yen Press
150 West 30th Street, 19th Floor
New York, NY 10001

Visit us at yenpress.com
facebook.com/yenpress • twitter.com/yenpress
yenpress.tumblr.com • instagram.com/yenpress

First Yen Press Edition: July 2023
Edited by Abigail Blackman and Yen Press Editorial: JuYoun Lee
Designed by Yen Press Design: Liz Parlett

Yen Press is an imprint of Yen Press, LLC.
The Yen Press name and logo are trademarks of Yen Press, LLC.

The publisher is not responsible for websites (or their content) that are not owned by the publisher.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2023936587

ISBNs: 978-1-9753-6054-2 (paperback)
978-1-9753-6055-9 (ebook)

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

WOR

Printed in the United States of America